

I know that if we work together and embrace the possibility for a true national unity, we can reach an agreement to balance the budget that you will be proud of and that will be good for America. And that's what I am determined to do.

This is a moment of great progress and great promise for our country. Many of us hold very strong views about how best to seize that moment. But above all else, now is the time to find common ground, for taking the best that each side has to offer and fashioning a sensible solution. That's the American way. And that is what will get us to the right kind of balanced budget.

This budget debate has been difficult, demanding, and not always pretty. But remember, democracy is raucous and often full of debate that is not always pretty. But our country is still the world's greatest democracy, a beacon of peace and freedom for the world.

I ask for the help of every American so that we can build an even greater future for our children.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Signing the Sixth Continuing Resolution

January 6, 1996

Last night, I signed into law H.R. 1643, the Sixth Continuing Resolution for fiscal 1996, which puts all Federal workers back on the job with pay from December 16 until January 26 and also funds a limited number of Federal activities until September 30, 1996.

This bill is a step in the right direction—but only a step. It does not end the partial shutdown of the Federal Government that continues to seriously impair the activities of the Departments of Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, and Veterans Affairs; the Environmental Protection Agency; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Small Business Administration; and many smaller agencies.

Most importantly, H.R. 1643 enables Federal workers to return to the job and to be paid—both the 480,000 who have been working without pay and the 280,000 furloughed workers.

The bill also funds a limited number of Federal functions for the rest of fiscal 1996. They include nutrition services for the elderly; grants to States for child welfare services; Federal Parent Locator Service activities; State unemployment insurance administration activities; general welfare assistance payments and foster care payments to Indians; the Federal subsidy to the rail industry pension and certain other expenses of the Railroad Retirement Board; visitor services of the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and United States Holocaust Memorial; and State Department visa, passport, and U.S. citizen services. In addition, family support payments to States and payments to States for foster care and adoption assistance are provided through March 15, 1996.

The bill ensures, through September 30, 1996, benefit payments to about 3.3 million veterans and their survivors. It also provides for payments to contractors of the Veterans Health Administration for services related to the health and safety of patients in Veterans Affairs medical facilities.

The measure provides authority for the District of Columbia to continue full operations, using District funds, through September 30, thereby extending the authority provided by the Fifth Continuing Resolution for fiscal 1996, which expires January 25. Regrettably, the measure contains an objectionable provision that would single out poor women by prohibiting the use of District funds for providing abortion services. I oppose including this provision in the regular fiscal 1996 District of Columbia appropriations bill, and I urge the Congress to send that bill to me—in a form I can sign—as soon as possible.

The measure also provides for reimbursement to States for State funds used to implement Federal programs and to pay furloughed State employees whose compensation is advanced or reimbursed, in whole or in part, by the Federal Government during

any 1996 lapse in appropriations and it makes interest payable on the State funds that were used.

The problem with this bill is in what it does *not* do. It does not end the inconvenience, if not suffering, that millions of Americans continue to experience because of the partial government shutdown. It does not provide funds to help put 100,000 more police officers on the streets of U.S. cities; funds for Head Start; funds for the States for social services and job training; funds to help U.S. businesses with export financing; and funds to continue the Space Station program and other key initiatives at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Nor does the bill provide needed funds for contracts vital to protecting the environment.

Along with denying services, the shutdown is threatening the vitality of thousands of businesses, many of them with contracts with the Federal Government. Also at risk are the jobs of thousands of workers in those businesses. The longer the shutdown continues, the more its effects will be felt.

Clearly, this bill is only a partial solution to the partial shutdown. The real solution, and the one that the Congress should pursue without delay, is to send me acceptable 1996 appropriations bills for the agencies in question or, at a minimum, an acceptable continuing resolution that will permit the Government to perform the full range of services that citizens expect.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 6, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 1643, approved January 6, was assigned Public Law No. 104-92.

Statement on Signing the Seventh Continuing Resolution

January 6, 1996

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1358, the Seventh Continuing Resolution for fiscal 1996, which provides funds for a long list of Federal activities through September 30.

This continuing resolution builds upon H.R. 1643, which I signed early this morning and which put all Federal workers back on

the job with pay from December 16 to January 26 and provided funding for a limited list of Federal activities.

While both measures help to restore needed Government services, the Congress has not ended the partial shutdown of the Federal Government, nor the suffering it is causing millions of Americans and thousands of businesses. The shutdown continues to affect the Departments of Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, and Veterans Affairs; the Environmental Protection Agency; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Small Business Administration; and many smaller agencies.

This bill provides full-year funding for allowances to Peace Corps volunteers, their spouses and minor children; activities, including administrative expenses, needed to process single-family mortgage loans and refinancing for low-income and moderate-income families; projects and activities directly related to the security of U.S. diplomatic posts and facilities abroad; the Federal Emergency Management Agency's emergency food and shelter program; retirement pay and medical benefits for Public Health Service Commissioned Officers, payments under the Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan and Survivor Benefit Plan and for the medical care of dependents and retired personnel, and payments to the Social Security trust funds, which the Secretary of Health and Human Services deemed necessary because of Commissioned Officer pay raises; and projects and certain activities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Organized Crime Drug Enforcement, Federal Prison System, U.S. Attorneys, U.S. Marshals Service, Support of U.S. Prisoners, Fees and Expenses of Witnesses, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

Also funded are projects and activities of the Judiciary; Health Care Financing Administration State surveys and certifications; trade adjustment assistance benefits and North American Free Trade Act benefits; payments to health care trust funds; expenses of Medicare contractors; grants to States for